Under sea cable between India and middle east

1684. SHRIMATI KAMLA MANHAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL) is planning to set up on under sea cable system between India and middle east;

(b) if so, the details thereof with quantum bandwidth on th route with total investment of the project and total capacity being planned on this route;

(c) whether BSNL also propose to share the infrastructure with private telecom operators at mutually agreeable fee; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) M/s Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has intimated about planning of total bandwidth of 320 Giga bit (ultimate capacity) with a total investment of Rs. 800/- crores catering to 3.87 Million Voice Channels.

(c) The decision in this regard would be taken as per prevailing market situation at that time by BSNL.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Laying of cable between Chennai and Singapore

1685. SHRIMATI KAMLA MANHAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is an over supply scenario on the India-Singapore submarine cable route where BSNL is planning to build its cable;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether it is fact that as many as 3-mega capacity cables would be operational between Chennai and Singapore shortly;

(d) if so, the reasons for laying of cable connecting Chennai and Singapore by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL) and to what extent it would be beneficial to subscribers; and

(e) whether any feasibility study has been conducted by BSNL keeping in view the costly infrastructure and if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) It is difficult to estimate whether there is an over supply scenario on the India-Singapore cable route as the cable that are built have a life of few years and they are created to meet the demands of the country. Further, the traffic is built up to various other countries including U.S.A. from Singapore.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e) M/s Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has informed that the submarine cable laying project on India Singapore route is at conceptual stage. So far feasibility study has not been conducted.

Reduction of licence fee for long distance service

1686. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whethr it is a fact that Government are proposing to reduce the licence fee for long-distance service providers;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that the move will have current level of Government revenue directly to the tune of Rs. 500 crores;

(c) if so, in what manner Government are thinking of filling this revenue deficit; and

(d) whether Government have decided to reduce the licence fee for new entrants in the NLD services and it is the reason for controversy which has resulted in demanding compensation by the three major players which comes to Rs. 2800 crores?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir. Government have decided to reduce the Licence Fee for Long Distance Services with effect from 1.1.2006.